



## FWP NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 25, 2020

### **Some Elk B license holders will have extended hunting opportunity in select west-central Montana districts**

**MISSOULA** – Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) officials have extended the elk hunting season through January 15, 2021 for holders of certain unfilled, antlerless Elk B Licenses that are valid in portions of west-central Montana, in FWP Region 2.

The Elk B Licenses for which the season is extended are 213-01, 215-02, 217-02, 262-01, 291-03 and 293-01. Hunters were awarded one of these special licenses through a drawing earlier this year, and 262-01 was available over the counter prior to the start of the season. No licenses are available for purchase now.

The license opportunity would have ended at the close of general season on Sunday, Nov. 29 but will be extended by approximately six weeks due to relatively low elk harvest so far in places where elk tend to congregate and cause private land damage over the winter months.

The hunting districts (HDs) where the B Licenses remain valid during the extension are the same districts for which these B Licenses were valid in the general elk season, except for the 262-01 B License. During the general season, the 262-01 B License was valid in multiple HDs, but in the extended season it is valid only in HD 204.

The B Licenses are almost exclusively valid on private lands, and in some cases on adjoining DNRC lands outside the National Forest boundary. DNRC lands within FWP Wildlife Management Areas are specifically closed to the extended elk season. Regulations that governed the use of these Elk B Licenses during the general season will continue to be enforced in the extended season. Hunters, landowners and other interested parties are advised to closely review the [2020 Montana Deer, Elk and Antelope Hunting Regulations](#) for specifics.

The reason for the extension was low elk harvest on private lands during the general hunting season in places where elk numbers are above population objectives and where private land access was available during the general season but the desired harvest wasn't met. The decision to extend the elk season for these B License holders was made in accordance with the Administrative Rules of Montana (12.9.1105), which establish criteria that must be met and identify the FWP Director and local Fish and Wildlife Commissioner as the decision-makers.

“Relatively mild weather was a big factor in the low harvest in these areas, and hunter interest fell off when the elk weren’t moving,” said Mike Thompson, FWP Region 2 Wildlife Manager. “By extending the season for Elk B license holders in these areas, hunters will be able to take advantage of elk movements into stored crops and hay as the winter comes on. It will be a help to private landowners and to elk management by putting harvest pressure on elk that are causing problems and by leaving elk on public land alone.”

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